



ART IN CINEMA

Series Five

September 23rd

SONG OF CEYLON

By BASIL WRIGHT

Britain's most famous and lyrical use of factual material.

IL PARADISO TERRESTE RACCONTO DA UN AFFRESCO IL CANTO DELLA CREATORE GUERRERI

By LUCIANO EMMER and ENRICO GRAS

Four contemporary experimental films from Italy.

BERLIN STILL LIFE

SPREE

GYPSIES

MARSEILLES, VIEUX PORT

By L. MOHOLY-NAGY

Presented and discussed by Sibyl Moholy-Nagy.

COLOR DESIGNS NO. 1

By HUGO LATELTINE

PROEM

By LEONARD TREGILLUS and RALPH LUCE

Journey into the imaginary world of a chess board.

September 30th

A NOUS LA LIBERTE

By RENE CLAIR

The epitome of cinematic wit.

LA ROSE ET LE RESEDA

A recent experimental film from France. From a poem
by LOUIS ARAGON; recited by JEAN-LOUIS
BARRAULT, with score by JACQUES IBERT.

1848

By LE COOPERATIVE DU CINEMA FRANCAIS

A revolutionary use of graphic art with film.

MR. TRULL FINDS OUT

By HENWAR RODAKIEWICZ and JOSEPH KRUMGOLD

with score by GIAN-CARLO MENOTTI.

SAUSALITO

By FRANK STAUFFACHER

Unfamiliar visual and aural sensations of a familiar
locale.

GIVE US THIS DAY

By LEROY ROBBINS and ROGER BARLOW

An experimental documentary.

October 7th

THE LAST LAUGH

By F. W. MURNAU

EMIL JANNINGS in the great German film that
liberated the moving-picture camera as a fluid
medium.

OBJECT LESSON

By CHRISTOPHER YOUNG

A famous American-made experiment of the thirties.

MR. FRENHOFFER AND THE MINOTAUR

By SIDNEY PETERSON

Produced by Workshop 20, California School of Fine
Arts. Based upon a story by Balzac.

ODD FELLOWS HALL

A satire by Leonard Tregillus and Denver Sutton.

LA POULETTE GRIS

DOTS

LOOPS

By NORMAN McLAREN

AQUA PURA BALLET

By JACK CANNON and RALPH ELLIOT

October 14th

DUCK SOUP

THE FOUR MARX BROTHERS

Directed by LEO McCAREY (1933)

PICNIC

By CURTIS HARRINGTON, with score by ERNEST GOLD
Subtle depiction of a subjective adventure within the
framework of middle-class life.

THE LEAD SHOES

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ARTICULATION

By CLAIRE FALKENSTEIN

FORM EVOLUTION

By MARTIN METAL

Growth, evolution and final dissolution of plastic form.

EVEN AS YOU AND I

By LEROY ROBBINS and ROGER BARLOW

A new angle on surrealism.

GOETHE IN SAN FRANCISCO

By FRANK STAUFFACHER

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THE ART IN CINEMA SOCIETY of the SAN FRANCISCO MUSEUM OF ART presents

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~ SONG OF CEYLON.....Produced by John Greirson and directed
by Basil Wright

~ ODD FELLOWS HALL.....Denver Sutton and Leonard Tregillus

~ MARSEILLES, VIEUX PORT).....L. Moholy-Nagy; presented by Sibyl
~ BERLIN STILL LIFE) Moholy-Nagy
~ GYPSIES)

(INTERMISSION)

~ COLOR DESIGNS NO. 1.....Hugo Lateltine

~ IL CANTO DELLA CREATORE)
~ GUERRIERI).....Luciano Emmer, Enrico Gras.
~ RACCONTO DA UN AFFRESCO)

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

SONG OF CEYLON (British 1934-35) (35 Min.) Produced by John Grierson with the Ceylon Tea Propaganda Board. Directed by Basil Wright. Music by Walter Leigh.

Song of Ceylon was produced as one of a series of films made for the Ceylon Tea Propaganda Board, but it is hardly a tea advertisement. Rather it is an insight into the lives of the Singhalese, conceived on the level of the senses and lifted toward philosophy by the shape it has been given. It was the first consistent effort to use sound as a counterpoint to visuals, the "dialectical" form of the second and third sequences being based upon a commentary drawn from a seventeenth-century traveller's account of Ceylon. Though the mounting contrast between what is seen and what is heard results in a sophisticated interpretation of Western Civilization on Singhalese life, the meaning of this film has often had less impact than its sheer beauty, at times so intense as to become a private experience which is accepted without interpretation, like music. SONG OF CEYLON is generally regarded by critics as one of the masterpieces of the documentary film. (Note by Iris Barry. From the Museum of Modern Art Film Library)

ODD FELLOWS HALL by Denver Sutton and Leonard Tregillus (San Francisco 1949) (6 min.) This film represents an attempt to recreate the humor of the silent films, although in a more modern idiom. The basic premise followed is: visual gags are much more laugh-provoking than aural gags. To this end, the humor in ODD FELLOWS HALL is based completely on implausible situations, displaced props and improbable time continuity, with no help coming from titles or sound track dialogue. Techniques in direction and continuity as developed by Melies, Sennett, Lloyd, and particularly Clair were used. The murderers depicted become stylized, as in the ballet, but for comedy's sake they continually waver on the brink of, or become completely submerged in the realm of the ridiculous. (Leonard Tregillus.)

THE THREE FILMS by L. Moholy-Nagy will be introduced by Sibyl Moholy-Nagy.

(INTERMISSION)

COLOR DESIGNS NO. 1 by Hugo Lateltine. (From Cinema 16) (6 min.) A brilliant tapestry of color, created by light reflections and color filters. The evolving designs are not geometric, but organic, their slowly changing forms evoking a dream-like atmosphere and strong sensory impressions of space and depth.

The Italian painter and motion picture director LUCIANO EMMER, working in close cooperation with his wife, TATIANA GRANDING, and ENRICO GRAS, has emerged as one of the outstanding creators of modern art films. During the fascist regime, a brush with the Italian Ministry of Popular Culture forced him and his wife to retire to Switzerland, while Enrico Gras was conscripted into the army. After Mussolini's fall, he was able to resume his experiments with motion pictures based on classical paintings. His work has left a definite imprint on the rapidly maturing artfilm. In 1948, Emmer was elected Secretary General of the Congres International du Film sur l'Art in Paris.

Rather than to analyze one painting or the work of one master, Emmer utilizes the dynamic medium of the motion picture to tell a dramatic story. In this way, he has been able to continue the functions of the ancient artist who used his art to recreate and visualize popular legends. By emphasizing the story rather than the work of art itself, Emmer solves the problem of bringing still pictures to life on the motion picture screen without doing violence to the work of art on which the film is based. He is faithful both the the spirit and substance of the original and revealing in imaginative penetration and exploration.

IL CANTICO DELLA CREATORE has as its theme Giotto's frescoes of Saint Francis of Assisi.

GUERRIERI constitutes the reconstruction of a medieval feat of arms, utilizing paintings by Simone Martini, Domenico Morone, Paolo Uccello and Piero della Francesca.

RACCONTO DA UN AFFRESCO tells the story of Christ according to Giotto's frescoes in the Capella degli Scrovegni in Padua. By analyzing and breaking up the panels into their dramatic components and then synthesizing them into a new cinematographic unity, Emmer reconstructs in the dimension of time the drama that, pictorially, was developed by Giotto in the dimension of space. The film stresses the dramatic continuity inherent in the frescoes which the artist painted in sequence, almost like a film strip or even a motion picture, designed to be seen by moving from panel to panel. The musical score and occasional quotes from the Scriptures serve to heighten the drama, as for instance in the gruesome slaughter of the innocents. (Robert Katz)

NOTE: The fourth Emmer-Gras film, IL PARADISO TERRESTE will be included on a later program, due to the length of tonight's films.

PROEM has been replaced by ODD FELLOW'S HALL as the original musical score for the former is not yet recorded. PROEM will be shown October 7th.

Moholy-Nagy's SPREE has been omitted due to the poor condition of the print.

(F. S.)

THE ART IN CINEMA SOCIETY of the SAN FRANCISCO MUSEUM OF ART presents

ART IN CINEMA

SERIES FIVE

September 30, 1949

NOTICE: Due to the length of a number of the films scheduled on Series Five, a fifth program on October 21st will be added to contain those films necessarily omitted throughout the four programs of the series. This fifth program will, of course, be available to Series Five ticket holders without additional cost.

The film MR. TRULL FINDS OUT will be presented on October 21st; SAUSALITO, scheduled for this evening, will be presented next week, October 7.

✓ GIVE US THIS DAY.....Roger Barlow

✓ 1848.....La Cooperative Generale
du Cinema Francais

✓ LA ROSE ET LE RESEDA.....Andre Michel

Intermission

✓ A NOUS LA LIBERTE.....Rene Clair

PROGRAM NOTES

GIVE US THIS DAY by Roger Barlow (5 min.) (Courtesy Mr. Barlow) A short social comment made during the depression years of the early thirties at a time when many such experimental expressions were being made by men who later developed into significant figures in the American Documentary movement.

1848 produced by La Cooperative Generale du Cinema Francais (20 min.) (A.F. Films) The ingenious technique of presenting the subject matter of a film through the use of graphic art, so superbly accomplished in the Italian Emmer-Gras films shown last week, is used here to tell the story of the volcanic uprising in Paris of 1848 through the medium of prints and engravings of the period, particularly those of Daumier, Garvanni, and Decamps.

It may be argued that such use of static material is essentially non-cinematic and is at best the dramatization of a medium (graphic art) that should be experienced as it was originally intended, not transposed through the eye of another medium. But the subject of a moving picture camera does not necessarily have to be moving in order to be "cinematic". In the technique of film there is also the movement of the camera, and the movement, psychologically created, by cutting and montage. A static subject can be given a special kind of life infused with a dramatic power peculiar to the cinema.

LA ROSE ET LE RESEDA produced by Andre Michel after a poem by Louis Aragon, spoken by Jean-Louis Barrault; music by George Auric. (10 min.) is an appropriate continuation and contrast, in technique of presenting history, to the film 1848.

A NOUS LA LIBERTE (1931) Written and directed by Rene Clair. Camera by George Perinal and music by George Auric. (85 min.) Rene Clair began his career as a journalist, became a film actor, appeared in several films by Louis Feuillade and one by the Russian emigre, Protazanov, before he was made assistant director to Baroncelli. When he undertook his first independent film it was with the conviction that the French cinema had taken a wrong direction around 1907, and that the remedy was to turn back again for inspiration to its humble but pure beginnings, to the films of Melies and Zecca, and - above all - to playfulness, movement and unreality. (Iris Barry)

A Nous la Liberte is rather imperfectly constructed, and it overstresses both the similarity between the factory and the prison as well as the numerous chases, but it is undoubtedly the film in which Rene Clair put most of himself. Memories of many celebrated pictures, such as The Pilgrim, The Gold Rush and City Lights, are added to the creative qualities of Le Million, to themes repeated from Entr'acte, to atmosphere borrowed from Les Deux Timides or Chapeau de Paille. Yet Clair had never before penetrated so far into the world of pure imagination. By the time we reach the magnificent confusion of the end, he seems actually to have risen above his subject, his characters, his personal experiences and even life itself. It would be an error to consider that extraordinary scene in which the breeze scatters a bagful of bank notes over the heads of the crowd as a mere piece of fertile invention, like that which suddenly suggested the football match in Le Million. If the members of the crowd at the inauguration were simply running after the bank notes, that would be the end of them: they would vanish along with their booty. As it is, they reappear, running here and there all over the factory without apparent aim but not without order, for they form skillful dance designs as they thread in and out; and in fact they are dancing. It is good, after the grief of Henri Marchand and the imaginary voyage to the land of tinted postcards, to be back again in a realm where pastime is your only king. With this penultimate scene in A Nous la Liberte Clair renews his youth and sings a hymn in praise of pure movement, just as he had in Entr'acte.

It is impossible not to like this ambitious film in which, twice over, Clair so fully expresses himself, both in delineating the sorrows of love amid the beauties of the make-believe landscapes, and in this game which has no other motive than play. He utilized everything, even his early novel Adams, in this satire on Americanism. Two or three minor characters escaped from other films link everything together, and the clear, lively music of Georges Auric preserves the unity which seems so often in danger of being broken.
(Bardeche and Brasillach)

- Frank Stauffacher

October 7, 1949

NOTE: During the intermission, in the absence of those members of the audience who have left their seats, it is requested that others do not sit in them for the second half of the program.

Christopher Young's OBJECT LESSON originally scheduled for tonight, will be shown next week, October 14. DOTS and LOOPS by Norman McLaren will be shown October 21.

✓ THE LAST LAUGH.....F. W. Murnau

✓ AQUA PURA BALLET.....Jack Cannon & Ralph Elliot

Intermission

✓ LA POULETTE GRIS.....Norman McLaren

✓ PROEM.....Leonard Tregillus & Ralph Luce

✓ SAUSALITO.....Frank Stauffacher

✓ MR. FRENHOFER AND THE MINOTAUR.....Sidney Peterson

PROGRAM NOTES

THE LAST LAUGH (DER LETZE MANN) (1924) (60 min.) Produced by Ufa, Directed by F. W. Murnau. Original story and scenario by Carl Mayer. Photography by Karl Freund. The Last Laugh inaugurated a revolution in film making: it broke with the past both in technique and in theory. Hitherto, a discontinuous method of pictorial narration had been in general use. Films were composed after the photographic process had been completed, by joining together the various shots taken with a stationary camera, which was shifted only between scenes. In The Last Laugh a new and continuous method of narration was used, for here appear prolonged stretches of uninterrupted and uncut images, in which the camera itself has moved to follow the progress of the action. This film took final shape before, not after, shooting, and was played in sets specially constructed to permit continuous action and continuous photography, with the camera mounted on perambulating trucks or swinging cranes. It was, actually, the joint product of four men - Murnau the director, Freund the cameraman, Mayer the scenarist, and Jannings the principal actor - who together conceived and developed it as a pictorial unit, working with unusual freedom in a studio unparalleled anywhere, at that time, for its technical equipment and the ingenuity of its craftsmen.

The Last Laugh, together with E. A. Dupont's not widely dissimilar Variety (1925) brought the German cinema universal acclaim, led to the rather complete Germanization of the Hollywood studios for a time, and introduced a wide-spread though not always intelligent use of traveling cameras and strange photographic tricks. Yet it is not the use of the moving camera alone which deserves attention in The Last Laugh. The ingenious sets look singularly convincing; they occasionally suggest the influence of Adolphe Appia in their broad surfaces, simple illumination and absence of detail. Actually, though the camerawork is striking, its use is not always consistent. At moments the camera is identified with the audience, as an intimate, roving observer of the old doorman as he shuffles about. At other times the camera is identified with the old man himself, and not with the audience at all: objects blur before its vision as they do before his eyes. Janning's performance has rightly been much praised, and if his movements occasionally seem unnecessarily mannered, this may well be because his acting is still largely in the expressionist tradition, whereas the film as a whole is in another style. (Iris Barry).

AQUA PURA BALLET By Jack Cannon and Ralph Elliot (3 Min). A study of motion and color for no sake other than its own. The various asymmetrical rhythms, forms and tempos have nothing in common beyond the subject matter. The sound background is one of many choices which could have produced a similar audio-visual contrast.

- INTERMISSION -

LA POULETTE GRIS by Norman McLaren (French-Canadian) (5 min.) One of Mr. McLaren's most famous films, made for general theatrical release in Canada.

PROEM by Leonard Tregillius and Ralph Lyce, 1949. This film is a continuation of the producers' experiments with animated modelling clay, but unlike the first film, NO CREDIT, which was merely a spontaneous exploration into the possibilities of clay, PROEM has been conceived with a definite point in mind. Specifically, it is an allegory in eight scenes, containing both impressions and abstractions of a familiar theme as the artists see it. The eight scenes are: 1, The Euclidian rook; 2, A Quixotic interlude; 3, A catholic fable; 4, Sex and such; 5, The great dictator; 6, Power politics; 7, Mobilization; 8, Deceitment. PROEM was originally planned and photographed to be exactly synchronized with selections from Debussy's "Variations on a Nursery Tune". However, a new sound track, with the music written for the film by William Smith of Point Richmond, has been completed in time for this Art in Cinema presentation. (Leonard Tregillius and Ralph Lyce, Berkeley, Cal.)

SAUSALITO by Frank Stauffacher (1949) (10 minutes). This is a personal comment, not a documentary. Textures, sounds and pieces of visual experience that arise out of contact with the particular locale, have been combined and arranged, cut, edited, montaged and juxtaposed in an effort to create a unified statement of reaction. The sequence of images and sounds have no literary reference; they follow one another as a combination of abstract shapes, and sensory experiences. It is like a strong impulsive act of memory evoked by the hearing of a certain tune or by the breathing of a particular fragrance.

MR. FRENCHOFER AND THE MINOTAUR (Spring 1949) (A Workshop 20 Production. Directed by Sidney Peterson. Based on Balzac's Chef d'oeuvre Inconnu). In this film version of an early 19th century treatment of a late 17th century theme the story is strained through the mind of a minor character and in the process receives a liberal admixture of a 20th century treatment of a myth that was old before the start of the Christian Era. Here Poussin, the protagonist of The Unknown Masterpiece, is done over again according to that part of Nature most suitably expressed in the form and lack of form of an interior monologue. And to the mixed triviality and even mawkish sentimentality of the great writer's somewhat Hollywoodian approach to the subject of a quest for an absolute has been added a mild joycean flavor of verbal disintegration. The visual distortion is by way of getting away from the usual literalness of the unmodified camera's view of things, a literalness that tends to address the captured image as such to the uppermost layers of the mind. The diffusiveness of the image is a deliberate attempt to catch the quality of what Henry James called "the projected light of the individual strong temperament in fiction - the color of the air with which this, that or the other painter of life more or less unconsciously suffuses his picture...something that proceeds from the contemplative mind itself, the very complexion of the mirror in which the material is reflected." James identifies Balzac's air as "rich and thick, a mixture of sun and shade richer and thicker and representing absolutely greater quantity of 'atmosphere', than we shall find prevailing within the compass of any other suspended frame." The fidelity of the film's "atmosphere" is certainly greater than its adherence to the plot of the original story. The intrusion of elements taken from Picasso's Minotaure is by way of antidote and modification of Balzac's rather simple acceptance of the worship of painting as consisting of a devotion to naturalism and of deviation from that devotion as being mere madness. In the labyrinth in which Balzac is supposed finally to have lost himself there was also, of necessity, a Minotaur and, also of necessity, a Minotaure. As for the detail of MR. FRENCHOFER, its interpretation should be on another level entirely. Thus the recurring "Kitty" is a reference to Catherine Lescault, the subject of the unknown masterpiece, but though Catherine is Kitty and Kitty Catherine, both are equally something else and so on. This is not complicated, merely diffuse, a sort of indefinite intellectual extension of quantitative atmosphere whereby we are not led to conclude as the film ends, where it starts, but in some vast labyrinth of endless reference where it is also possible to encounter Minotaurs which are simply the monsters, pictorial or otherwise, which we should have the courage to recognize after first, of course, discovering them. (Sidney Peterson)

- Frank Stauffacher

THE STATE OF NEW YORK
IN SENATE
January 10, 1910.
REPORT
OF THE
COMMISSIONERS OF THE LAND OFFICE
IN RESPONSE TO A RESOLUTION
PASSED BY THE SENATE
MAY 1, 1909.
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1910.

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ART IN CINEMA

SERIES FIVE

AS PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED there will be one additional program given next Friday evening, Oct. 21st, in order to present certain films omitted during the Series. Some new material will be added at that time. There will be no further admission charge to Series subscribers.

LeRoy Robbins' *EVEN AS YOU AND I*, Martin Metal's *FORM EVOLUTION*, Frank Stauffacher's *GOETHE IN SAN FRANCISCO* have been shifted to that additional program.

Oct. 14th, 1949

DUCK SOUP.....The Four Marx Brothers, etc.
(Intermission)

OBJECT LESSON.....Christopher Young

TOUCHING THE QUICK

(Previously announced

as *ARTICULATION*).....Claire Falkenstein

THE LEAD SHOES.....Workshop 20, Calif. School of Fine
Arts; directed by Sidney Peterson.

PICNIC.....Curtis Harrington

Program Notes

DUCK SOUP (1933) Directed by Leo McCarey; story and screen adaptation by Bert Kalner and Harry Ruby. (Paramount) Roger Manvell, the British film writer and critic, says this about the Marx Brothers in his book *Film*: "Into a world of pomp and circumstance, the Marx Brothers burst like a wind of relief. They represent all the things that one was brought up not to do. They take the place to pieces with steady glee. They dress like nothing on earth except that their clothes are recognizable in bits and pieces. Groucho moves with the assured insolence of a ballet dancer who cannot stop dancing off-stage.....he is the great charlatan who when he goes takes the door with him. Straight from music-hall to film, the Marx Brothers do not care a dime about the camera. They treat it like Margaret Dumont, though they know they cannot do without it. They fill the frame with struggling bodies in a ship's cabin. They stick it in front of them while they wisecrack to each other. Their wisecracks are in the quickest American tradition, and leave the gangsters slow. After a time they let romance in through the back door in order to give the audience a rest. But the romance leaves something to be desired."

A French attitude, perhaps not typical, is expressed in this quotation from Bardeche's *History of the Motion Picture*: "None of the other comedians would have so calmly made use of trick photography or of improbability; no one had done so since before the days of Max Linder and Mack Sennett. A certain degree of tolerance is needed before one can accept the Marx Brothers wholly. Their wisecracks are insupportable yet their type of comedy is really based on a technique of silence. In reality the Marx Brothers are clowns, as their antics and their costumes prove. In *DUCK SOUP* they were greatly praised for the scene in which two of the comedians in disguise meet one another and fancy they are looking into a mirror. People had forgotten that this was how a Max Linder film began and, for that matter, it can be seen any day in the circus.....This quartet, who first appeared in *COCONUTS* and grew famous through the fight in the stable in *MONKEY BUSINESS*, definitely became the champions of wit and absurdity."

(10 minute intermission)

OBJECT LESSON by Christopher Young. New York, 1935-39. (8 min.) This film, produced over a period of seven years, had considerable circulation in newsreel theatres and as a short in "art-film" houses, or foreign-film theatres. Mr. Young writes: "OBJECT LESSON is a history of the development and conflict of the forces of Life told symbolically with familiar objects. The forces are here considered to be: Nature, Idealism, Art, War, Decay. Invention is symbolized by the silver ball which floats away, lodges in a rock and gives birth to the Industrial Age. But the Depression comes, the machines decay, bringing war. After the ruin of war the ideals still persist."

TOUCHING THE QUICK by Claire Falkenstein (previously announced as ARTICULATION) (20 min.) Miss Falkenstein provides the following program note: "It hurts! It moves! Its alive! How irritating! Yet there is a spatial song from time to time. A volume within a volume within a volume within a volume within....CONTRASTS. GRADUATIONS.

nest of fire in the sea
fire in the single vibrating element
sea in the rocking form
rocking, rocking to swing
swing to hold-
hold-move-hold-move-hold
to see and feel

We regret that the further dimension of music is missing at this first showing of TOUCHING THE QUICK. The composition by Ray Green, to accompany the film is not yet available. Rather than attempt to associate something not especially composed for the film, we have decided to show it silently."

THE LEAD SHOES Produced by Workshop 20, California School of Fine Arts; directed by Sidney Peterson; Summer, 1949. "THE LEAD SHOES is a cinematic exploration of the latent content of two ballads, Edward, and The Three Ravens. The basic themes of both ballads are combined and scrambled in the style of a jam session version of an ejaculatory hymn. In its relation to balladry the film represents a complete departure from the academic, antiquarian approach on the one hand, and the so-called higher vaudeville on the other." (Sidney Peterson)

PICNIC by Curtis Harrington, with a score by Ernest Gold. (1948-49) "This film begins as a genre film-comedy of American middle-class life. It ends as a minor tragedy in the same milieu. In between the objective reality of these two sequences lies the subjective adventure of the protagonist, caught up in the fatality of a false love. The protagonist's quest is necessarily doomed because of the influences that surround the object of his affection; and his very love is essentially false because it is expended on an idealized dream-image rather than a reality.

Recurrent images serve to emphasize the forces of actuality, forces which even appear mysteriously, but significantly, in the subjective, personal adventure.

The imagery of the film is self-contained: all meanings, suggestions, symbols, ideas----everything is immediately present, if not immediately perceivable; no outside frame of reference need be referred to in order to understand it. If preconceived associations with the predominantly bourgeois pastime of the picnic serve to heighten certain aspects of the film in the minds of some spectators, it is only natural, and, to a certain extent, expected and hoped-for by the film maker. However, the fact that the film springs from the American culture pattern--and therefore may have a more immediate significance to Americans aware of that culture pattern and its implications--does not obviate the basic, universal validity of the images." (Curtis Harrington)

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F.S.

THE ART IN CINEMA SOCIETY of the SAN FRANCISCO MUSEUM OF ART presents

ART IN CINEMA

SERIES FIVE

AS PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED there will be one additional program given next Friday evening, Oct. 21st, in order to present certain films omitted during the Series. Some new material will be added at that time. There will be no further admission charge to Series subscribers.

LeRoy Robbins' *EVEN AS YOU AND I*, Martin Metal's *FORM EVOLUTION*, Frank Stauffacher's *GOETHE IN SAN FRANCISCO* have been shifted to that additional program.

Oct. 14th, 1949

DUCK SOUP.....The Four Marx Brothers, etc.
(Intermission)

OBJECT LESSON.....Christopher Young

TOUCHING THE QUICK

(Previously announced

as ARTICULATION).....Claire Falkenstein

THE LEAD SHOES.....Workshop 20, Calif. School of Fine
Arts; directed by Sidney Peterson.

PICNIC.....Curtis Harrington

Program Notes

DUCK SOUP (1933) Directed by Leo McCarey; story and screen adaption by Bert Kalner and Harry Ruby. (Paramount) Roger Manvell, the British film writer and critic, says this about the Marx Brothers in his book *Film*: "Into a world of pomp and circumstance, the Marx Brothers burst like a wind of relief. They represent all the things that one was brought up not to do. They take the place to pieces with steady glee. They dress like nothing on earth except that their clothes are recognizable in bits and pieces. Groucho moves with the assured insolence of a ballet dancer who cannot stop dancing off-stage....he is the great charlatan who when he goes takes the door with him. Straight from music-hall to film, the Marx Brothers do not care a dime about the camera. They treat it like Margaret Dumont, though they know they cannot do without it. They fill the frame with struggling bodies in a ship's cabin. They stick it in front of the while they wisecrack to each other. Their wisecracks are in the quickest American tradition, and leave the gangsters slow. After a time they let romance in through the back door in order to give the audience a rest. But the romance leaves something to be desired."

A French attitude, perhaps not typical, is expressed in this quotation from Bardeche's *History of the Motion Picture*: "None of the other comedians would have so calmly made use of trick photography or of improbability; no one had done so since before the days of Max Linder and Mack Sennett. A certain degree of tolerance is needed before one can accept the Marx Brothers wholly. Their wisecracks are insupportable yet their type of comedy is really based on a technique of silence. In reality the Marx Brothers are clowns, as their antics and their costumes prove. In DUCK SOUP they were greatly praised for the scene in which two of the comedians in disguise meet one another and fancy they are looking into a mirror. People had forgotten that this was how a Max Linder film began and, for that matter, it can be seen any day in the circus....This quartet, who first appeared in COCONUTS and grew famous through the fight in the stable in MONKEY BUSINESS, definitely became the champions of wit and absurdity."

(10 minute intermission)

OBJECT LESSON by Christopher Young. New York, 1935-39. (8 min.) This film, produced over a period of seven years, had considerable circulation in newsreel theatres and as a short in "art-film" houses, or foreign-film theatres. Mr. Young writes: "OBJECT LESSON is a history of the development and conflict of the forces of life told symbolically with familiar objects. The forces are here considered to be: Nature, Idealism, Art, War, Decay. Invention is symbolized by the silver ball which floats away, lodges in a rock and gives birth to the Industrial Age. But the Depression comes, the machines decay, bringing war. After the ruin of war the ideals still persist."

TOUCHING THE QUICK by Claire Falkenstein (previously announced as ARTICULATION) (20 min.) Miss Falkenstein provides the following program note: "It hurts! It moves! Its alive! How irritating! Yet there is a spatial song from time to time. A volume within a volume within a volume within a volume within....CONTRASTS. GRADUATIONS.

nest of fire in the sea
fire in the single vibrating element
sea in the rocking form
rocking, rocking to swing
swing to hold-
hold-move-hold-move-hold
to see and feel

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SERIES FIVE

NOTE: It is unfortunate that the following occurrence at the weekly programs of Art in Cinema has given cause for discomfort to subscribers: It has been our practice to allow various persons connected with the production of a particular film, free admission on the night that film is shown, provided they do not take seats until the subscription, or paid audience is seated - and if seats remain. During intermission, however, there occurs discourteous possession of other's seats by standees. Art in Cinema must sincerely apologize for this, and take steps at any future programs or series, to issue reserved seats only, and allow no free admission.

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In view of the sudden chance to include the important FARREBIQUE on Series Five, it has been necessary to omit some of the shorter works scheduled. It has been decided to arrange a more complete program or two in the near future, to contain local experimental work only, a program that will not constitute a series.

Oct. 21st, 1949

- ✓ UNTITLED.....Denver Sutton
- ✓ LINES AND IMAGINATION.....Pete Shoemaker
- ✓ FORM EVOLUTION.....Martin Metal

Intermission

- ✓ FARREBIQUE.....George Rouquier

Notes

UNTITLED .by Denver Sutton.(36 seconds) Originally, the film PROEM by Tregillus and Luce (shown here last Oct.7) had been put to the music of Dohnanyi's "Variations on a Nursery Rhyme" but it will be remembered that subsequently an original score by William Smith was used. Mr. Sutton has here gotten hold of a portion of the sound track of the unused music, and has hand-drawn an abstract visual accompaniment inspired by the patterns of a player piano roll.

LINES AND IMAGINATION by Pete Shoemaker(1949)(8 min.). This film attempts to evoke responses through associations in terms of symbolism and aesthetic feeling.(P.S.)

FORM EVOLUTION by Martin Metal;camera, Frank Stauffacher, original score by Leonard Rosenman(1949)(12 min.). The theme of the film -the evolution of form from a liquid and powdery beginning into a middle section of solid plaster sculpture, dissolving finally into an immersion of color-light - came about through the work of the Advanced Design Class at the City College of San Francisco under Martin Metal's direction. The entire class participated in the production of the film. Sculptures appearing were created by members of the class as follows: Martin Streich, Dolores Cabaceira, Ralph Putzker, Money Hickman and Mrs. Marjorie Close.

"Movement comes about through changes. Materials change, shapes change, locations change, and the opacity changes to transparency while the one becomes many, and many, one. The final change must be the dissolution into energy and light. The cycle can be shown in as many ways as there are changes to be made. FORM EVOLUTION is one attempt, and is in keeping with the intercommunication and the filmic consciousness of our life today."(M.M.)

Leonard Rosenman's musical score composed for flute, clarinet, trumpet and piano is not intended to synchronize note for note with the visual changes - but rather wants to catch the larger motion of the film. There is an intentional abandonment of mood music in order to fit the sequence as a whole through the application of crisp polyphony.

Intermission

FARREBIQUE, OU LES QUATRES SAISONS produced by L'Ecran Francais and Les Films Etienne Lallier; scenario and direction by George Rouquier; camera by Andre A. Danton. Scientific photography by Daniel Sarrade. Music by Henri Sauguet. (1946) (80 min.).

This beautiful and sombre pastorate is perhaps, outside of Dovzhenko's EARTH, the final rendition, in film, of the Soil and of the people who live close to it. One cannot imagine a more complete and poetic moulding of the theme - at least in using documentary material only, and impinging upon it no contrived drama or story. While one remembers the great film HARVEST as having much of this Corot-like poetry, the earth was felt more through Gallic metaphor than straight employment of things as they are. FARREBIQUE is a documentary film, but it transcends the ordinary application of documentary to the point where it can hardly be called such.

James Agee, writing in the "Nation" last year, said: "Rouquier's idea is simply to make a record of the work and living of a single farm family, of the farm, and of the countryside. I cannot imagine a better subject, or one that is as a rule more degenerately perceived and presented... He realizes that, scrupulously handled, the camera can do what nothing else in the world can do: can record unaltered reality; can be made also to perceive, record and communicate in full unaltered power, the peculiar kinds of poetic vitality which blaze in every real thing, and which are in a great degree, inevitably and properly lost to every other kind of artist except the camera artist. He is utterly faithful to this realization; and it is clear in nearly every shot that he is infinitely more than a mere documentor, that his poetic intelligence is profound, pure and vigorous. There is not an invented person or thing in the picture, and reenactments, and invented incidents are perfect examples of the discipline of imagination necessary under these difficult circumstances. Remarkable is his ability with all the small casual scraps of existence which are neither plot nor incident nor even descriptive, nor revealing of mood or character, but are merely themselves, and of the essence of being. He never imposes rhetoric or poetry upon these scraps, and they are never left half dead and helpless, as mere shots for shot's sake; they are incredibly hard stuff to organize, but he has so ordered them that they are fully and euphoniously articulate in their own perfect language. He knows as well as any artist I can think of the power and beauty there can be in absolute plainness....."

William Whitebait writes, "With the exception of RIEN QUE LES HEURES, Cavalcanti's impressionistic reporting of a Paris day, FARREBIQUE is the first considerable documentary yet made in France. Why should there have existed, until now, this gap in the most intelligent and realistic of all cinemas? The answer is to be found in the very realism that has always distinguished the French films; the lessons of documentary - think of Renoir, Vigo, Carne, etc. - had been learnt without the method. Nevertheless, the omission remains strange. FARREBIQUE may be regarded either as further delving into the regional life reflected by such films as GOUPI, MAINS ROUGES and L'ATALANTE, or a closing gap between science and poetry, in which, for some reason, French films had lagged. They had preferred a poetry of the comic and fantastic.

Prosaically, though with such beautiful definition, this Georgic begins. But it takes us deeper, in a couple of directions, than we expect. First, the people themselves are no mere puppets, and during the course of four seasons we get to know them as intimately as characters of fiction, though in different ways. The children grow up a little; another baby is born; electric light is laid on; a young man strains his back at harvesting, and begins to make love; the old grandfather, who in the field has twitched flies off the bullocks' eyes with a hazel branch, is himself dying, with a fly crawling over his temples, and, an old friend bends over to ask "How goes it then?" The complaint against documentaries that they miss the spark of living cannot be made here."

Frank Stauffacher

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In behalf of many local film makers, Art in Cinema wishes to extend its sincere thanks to Mr. McKenna and Mr. Earl Gille of Multichrome Laboratories for their numerous instances of extraordinary help in technical difficulties.